

Report to: **Audit and Governance Committee**



Date of Meeting 19 March 2026

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Review of Whistleblowing Policy

Report summary:

The Whistle-Blowing Policy has not been updated since 2022. The opportunity has therefore been taken to conduct a review, to ensure that it is up-to-date and fit for purpose.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

- (1) That the Audit and Governance Committee review the updated policy and approve with or without amendments.
- (2) That the Policy is submitted to Full Council, via the Constitution Working Group for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

Reason for recommendation:

It is important that the Council's Whistleblowing Policy is regularly reviewed and fit for purpose.

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Assets and Economy
- Communications and Democracy
- Council, Corporate and External Engagement
- Culture, Leisure, Sport and Tourism
- Environment - Nature and Climate
- Environment - Operational
- Finance
- Place, Infrastructure and Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; It is essential that the Council has a robust policy in place to ensure that concerns can be raised without fear of harassment or victimisation. This updated policy ensures that there is clarity as to who can utilise the policy and the process to be followed.

Links to background information

[Link to Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- A supported and engaged community
 - Carbon neutrality and ecological recovery
 - Resilient economy that supports local business
 - Financially secure and improving quality of services
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Report in full

1. The Whistleblowing Policy was last updated in 2022. It is important that it is reviewed at regular intervals and the opportunity has therefore been taken to update the policy to ensure it is fit for purpose and up-to-date.
 2. The following changes have been made:-
 - a. To remove the contents section at the beginning which was in the wrong place and not necessary due to the short nature of the policy.
 - b. To confirm that the policy has been reviewed in March 2026 and to set the next date for review to March 2029.
 - c. To include an introduction that makes the Councils approach to the highest standards of openness, probity and accountability clear and to clarify that anyone can use the policy, not just employees and that agency staff, consultants, contractors and members of the public can all “blow the whistle”.
 - d. Strengthening the text to make it clear that concerns can be raised without fear of victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage.
 - e. To give further examples of types of wrongdoing, including abuse or bullying of customers, unauthorised use of public funds or assets and abuse of power for financial or other gain.
 - f. To tidy up grammatical errors.
 - g. To update the list of individuals who can be spoken to about their concerns.
 - h. To update the list of organisations in the policy who can be contacted with their current titles and contact details.
 - i. To also refer to the Fraud Strategy, Anti-Money Laundering Policy and Anti-Bribery Policy.
 3. Members are invited to consider the updated policy and approve it, with or without further changes.
 4. Once approved, the Policy will be forward to Full Council, via the Constitutional Working Group, for inclusion in the Council’s Constitution.
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Financial implications:

There are no financial considerations to be added to this report

Legal implications:

The legal issues are dealt with in the updated Policy.